

Final Title I School Improvement Grant (SIG) Requirements and Application Procedure

For application and details: <http://www.ed.gov/programs/sif/applicant.html>

Application Deadline: February 8, 2010

SEA Requirements

Persistently lowest-achieving schools

means, as determined by the State—

(a)(1) Any **Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring** that--

(i) Is among the lowest-achieving **five percent** of Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring or the lowest-achieving five Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring in the State, whichever number of schools is greater; or

(ii) Is a high school that has had a **graduation rate** as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than **60 percent** over a number of years; and

(2) Any **secondary school** that is eligible for, but does not receive, Title I funds that--

(i) Is among the lowest-achieving **five percent** of secondary schools or the lowest-achieving five secondary schools in the State that are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I funds, whichever number of schools is greater; or

(ii) Is a high school that has had a **graduation rate** as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than **60 percent** over a number of years.

(b) To identify the **lowest-achieving schools**, a State must take into account both--

(i) The **academic achievement** of the "all students" group in a school in terms of proficiency on the State's assessments under section 1111(b)(3) of the ESEA in reading/language arts and mathematics combined; and

(ii) The school's **lack of progress** on those assessments over a number of years in the "all students" group.

- A. **ELIGIBLE SCHOOLS.** Provide a list, by LEA name and NCES ID #, of each school designated as Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III in the state.
- B. **EVALUATION CRITERIA.** Provide the criteria to be used to evaluate the LEA's application for a SIG grant.
- C. **CAPACITY.** Explain how SEA will evaluate whether an LEA lacks capacity to implement a SIG model in each Tier I school.
- D. **DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION.** Describe process and/or timeline for: approving LEA applications, reviewing LEA annual goals, monitoring LEA progress, determining annual LEA grant renewal, distributing funds if not enough funds to serve all eligible schools for which LEAs apply, determining whether Tier I or Tier II schools should receive <500K, prioritizing Tier III schools, identifying schools and intervention model subject to SEA takeover, and identifying schools subject to direct SEA assistance (and verify intervention model and LEA approval).
- E. **ASSURANCES.** Provide assurances related to general compliance, awarding funds to LEAs, using FY 2009 and 2010 SIG appropriations toward ARRA SIG goals, holding charter schools accountable for results, monitoring LEA implementation, posting LEA applications and results on web site, reporting certain school data.
- F. **SEA RESERVATION.** Describe admin/eval/tech assistance activities and expenses at state level for which SEA may reserve up to 5 percent of SIG funds.
- G. **CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS.** Attest that SEA has consulted with Committee of Practitioners and other stakeholders under ESEA Section 1903(b).
- H. **WAIVERS.** Describe waivers sought, including to extend period of available funds beyond 2013, allow turnaround or restart to "start over" in ESEA timeline, waive 40

THE THREE TIERS

(a) **Tier I schools:** A Tier I school is a Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that is identified by the SEA under paragraph (a)(1) of the definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools.”

(b) **Tier II schools:** A Tier II school is a secondary school that is eligible for, but does not receive, Title I, Part A funds and is identified by the SEA under paragraph (a)(2) of the definition of “persistently lowest-achieving schools.”

(c) **Tier III schools:** A Tier III school is a Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that is not a Tier I school. An SEA may establish additional criteria to use in setting priorities among LEA applications for funding and to encourage LEAs to differentiate among these schools in their use of school improvement funds.

percent poverty rule for Tier I schools, and allow use of SIG for Tier II schools.

LEA Requirements

The following must be included in the application to LEAs:

- A. **IDENTIFY SCHOOLS TO BE SERVED** (Tiers I, II and III) **AND INTERVENTION MODEL** (Tiers I and II)
- B. **PROVIDE DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION** related to needs of schools to be served, why not all Tier I schools will be served (if applicable), Tier III plans (if any), intervention models selected, capacity, resources, implementation, external resources and providers, sustainability, annual goals, LEA consult with stakeholders during application and implementation phases.
- C. **PROVIDE BUDGET** for amount of SIG funds LEA will use annually in each Tier I, II and III school it commits to serve.
- D. **PROVIDE ASSURANCES** related to overall implementation, establishing annual goals and measuring progress, “restart” or charter school/CMO/EMO accountability, providing certain school data.
- E. **INDICATE WHICH SEA WAIVERS THE LEA INTENDS TO**

USE. See above (SEA REQUIREMENTS). LEA may submit the waiver request directly to the Secretary if SEA has not applied for a waiver on its behalf.

Basic Program Outline and Important Points

- \$3.5 billion goes to all states that submit approved applications for SIG grants
- States must establish applications for LEAs to fill out and pursue SIG funds
- SEAs choose LEAs with “greatest need” that demonstrate the “strongest commitment”
 - “Greatest need” is determined by LEAs with schools in the three tiers (I, II, III)
 - “Strongest commitment” is determined by LEAs that agree to use one of the four intervention models for its Tier I and II schools
- Transformation model cannot be used in more than 50 percent of eligible Tier I and Tier II schools in LEAs with 9 or more such schools
- IMPORTANT LANGUAGE IN FINAL NOTICE:
 - ✓ The requirements for the turnaround model do not require “blanket firings” of staff. The Department agrees that staff should be carefully evaluated before any replacement decisions are made and has added new language requiring LEAs to use “locally adopted competencies to measure the effectiveness of staff who can work within the turnaround environment to meet the needs of students.” If required by State laws or union contracts, principals and staff may have to be reassigned to other schools as necessary. (p. 49 of final notice - not Federal Register version)
 - ✓ The Department encourages collaborations and partnerships between LEAs and teacher unions and teacher membership associations to resolve issues created by school intervention models in the context of existing collective bargaining agreements. We also encourage LEAs to collaborate with stakeholders in schools and in the larger community as they implement school interventions. (p 53 of final notice)
 - ✓ We note that restart models could include nearly all of the specific reform elements identified under the turnaround and transformation models, but decline to require the use of any particular element or strategy. (pp. 69-70 of final notice)
 - ✓ School closure occurs when an LEA closes a school and enrolls the students who attended that school in other schools in the LEA that are higher achieving. These other schools should be within reasonable proximity to the closed school and may include, but are not limited to, charter schools or new schools for which achievement data are not yet available. (pp. 75-76)

THE FOUR INTERVENTION MODELS

REQUIRED LEA Activities	TURN-AROUND	TRANS-FORMA-TION	RESTART	CLOSURE
Replace Principal (except those hired previously as part of turnaround or transformation effort)	√	√		
Operational flexibility (calendar, time, budget, staffing)	√	√		
Replace >50% of Staff using “locally adopted competencies”	√			
Close & reopen under Charter School Operator/CMO/EMO			√	
Close the school and send students to nearby schools - including but not limited to charter schools or new schools				√
Rigorous, transparent and equitable teacher and leader evaluation systems using student growth in significant part AND other measures AND designed with teacher/leader input	permissible	√		
Identify/reward effective & remove ineffective personnel	permissible	√		
High-quality, job-embedded, instructionally aligned professional development	√	√		
Financial incentives, career opportunities and flexible work conditions	√	√		
New governance structure	√	permissible		
Instructional reform	√	√		
Student data reform	√	√		
Increased learning time	√	√		
Socio-emotional and community supports	√			
Ongoing family and community engagement	permissible	√		
Ongoing intensive technical assistance from LEA, SEA or external partner	permissible	√		

THE FOUR INTERVENTION MODELS

<u>PERMISSIBLE</u> Activities*	TURN-AROUND	TRANS-FORMATION	RESTART*	CLOSURE
New school model (e.g. themed, dual language)	✓	see below re: “thematic learning academies”		
Additional compensation to attract and retain staff	✓	✓		
System to measure impact of professional development	✓	✓		
Ensure that school is not required to accept teacher without mutual consent of teacher and principal regardless of teacher seniority	✓	✓		
Periodic reviews of curriculum	✓	✓		
Response to Intervention model	✓	✓		
Additional supports to address students with disabilities and English language learners	✓	✓		
Using and integrating educational technology	✓	✓		
Increasing opportunities for advanced coursework, AP, IB, STEM, early college, dual enrollment, thematic learning academies	✓	✓		
Summer transition or freshman academies (middle to high school)	✓	✓		
Graduation rate improvement reforms	✓	✓		
Early warning systems for at-risk youth	✓	✓		
Partner with organizations, clinics, agencies, etc to meet students’ social, emotional, health needs	✓	✓		
Extend or restructure school day	✓	✓		
Implement approaches to improve school climate and discipline	✓	✓		
Full-day kindergarten or pre-K	✓	✓		
Per-pupil school-based budget formula weighted by student needs	✓	✓		

* Many strategies listed as “permissible” for turnaround and transformation schools above may theoretically be used in the restart model as well; however, because the Department’s final notice does not explicitly list those strategies as “permissible” under restart as it does for the other two models, they are not checked (✓) in the restart column; similarly,

the final notice does not list required or permissible activities for schools receiving students from schools that shut down under the “closure” model.